

NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL WRITERS
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etc
(First part of talk not recorded.)

One of the ways I'm working at it is to release to you more that can be released on the theory that when you have too much classified information, nobody respects it. And therefore, the more you declassify, the less you have to try to keep protected, the more people will take it seriously. So we're putting out a couple of unclassified studies a week; a wide range of topics--you've all heard of the energy studies we've put out on the world energy situation, Soviet energy, Chinese energy, international terrorism, balance of payments. Hans, what are some others you've put out in your economic field?

A: Well we've put out an awful lot of material ~~about~~ ^{that} essentially quantitative and non-controversial and that raise ^{doesn't} hackles in foreign governments by virtue of our making assessments that may have something to do their stability. That's a negative indication; standard statistical studies, basic resource analyses, not those which might create embarrassment.

We get into embarrassment all the time. I was accused of putting out the energy study to support the Administration's policy. It had been ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~strained~~ for over a year before we did it so we didn't do the study for the Administration, that's for sure. And a couple of weeks ago I was pilloried for tearing down the Administration's policy in a study on the Polish economy that we put out ~~in~~ ^{which} which supposedly was

going to upset all the policy^{makers}. And we're prepared to accept ^{that} sometimes we're popular, sometimes we're unpopular. If it can be declassified, if we think it will enhance the quality of American public debate on issues of importance to the country, we're going to try to publish.

It's part of an overall policy of greater openness stemming, in part, obviously from the years of criticism that we^{had} of the intelligence function and of the CIA in particular. The feeling that if we respond to you more, if we're more willing to have you come out here as you are today--and we're very pleased that you would--that we can hopefully restore some of the public confidence in what we consider to be an essential American institution.

In that same connection, looking to my CIA hat, one of the first things I did which you may possibly have heard about, if it got into the press in your part of the country, was to reduce the bloated bureaucracy by 820 positions here which was greeted with mixed applause by the media of the country, many of whom in the liberal side were anxious that we not get rid of all these fine old spys they've been cheering from the sidelines for all these years. But we had too many people on hand, there was never any disagreement that there were too many here but those who had to leave weren't very happy with the prospect.

Out of it we are also, in the Agency today, developing a new and more modern and more uniform equitable personnel management system. This has been a family corporation, we're now turning it into ^{the} an equivalent of a public corporation in a sense of trying to establish much

better career planning and management for ^{new} employees. And all of this, the reductions, the better personnel management is, I think, one of the things that is helping turn the morale around. It's particularly the younger people that are appreciating the cleaning off, not deadwood, but excess wood at the top is opening up clearer opportunities. I'm persuaded that if I don't do something to try to ensure we have the same attractiveness to American youth in 1988 as we've had in 1968 and 1978, we're not going to have a CIA of the future. And we were, frankly, bottlenecked, stymied by too many senior people around. We're trying to make a reasonable career prospect for the kind of people who are coming into this Agency in their late 20s, in particular, and we hope staying with us for the future. The morale is turning around in my opinion. In part because of things we're doing here but, in part, because I sense ~~the~~ ^{is a} trend in the public, in the media, on the Hill, of a recognition you can only go so far in criticizing of activity like this before you are going to drive it into disuse. The people who have made a career out here clearly were discouraged at the three plus years of very strong criticism.

I know that because I felt the same thing when the military took their lumps in Vietnam. But the military morale has come back. First because they've got good people and, secondly, because they've got an important mission and they sense that. And I don't think you see that in the military today like five--seven years ago, a young military officer wouldn't even wear his uniform out on the street from his ship, when he got to the base, and back and forth.

Same thing, I think, happened here in the wake of the criticisms and the disclosures--many of them exaggerated. But again, we've got excellent people, there are outstanding people here and we've got a very important mission and that, I think, is bringing it back around also.

And finally, I would have one last comment. If there is one revolutionary thing going on around here it's the development of an external oversight process involving not only the Executive Branch but the Legislative Branch of our country and its government. I think this is probably the first time in the history of any major intelligence organization that there really has been an effective external oversight process applied. It's working well and in the last year, year and a half, we've made great progress in working with the Congressional oversight committees. We have a good, but distant and oversight relationship--not a clubby relationship--with them but a good working relationship. It's going to take another two or three years to see if we can find the right balance in this oversight process between so much oversight that we don't have good intelligence, because there are too many leaks or we get too timid, and that we don't have enough oversight that the public can be reassured and that we are held accountable. ↗

Because the real value of the oversight to us, to me, is the accountability. If you are going to have the kinds of responsibility that we do have and the kinds of authority that we have out here, I think there are really positive values in being accountable and learning to be just that little bit more judicious because you know you're going to have to account for the decisions you make. That hasn't existed much

before. It's still, I would say, in what you might call the experimental stages. I think we are moving very much in the right direction but it is going to take more time before we settle out and see that it really will give us the assurances the country wants and yet allow us the latitude, the freedom to do the job that has to be done.

Who would like to lead off?

Q: Well, the President seems to be somewhat dissatisfied with the degree of political intelligence he's been getting on some issues. Could you discuss that a little bit?

A: Sure. The most difficult part of intelligence analysis is predicting political events. In military intelligence you've at least got some hardware to count. In economic intelligence you've got some beans to count or some statistics to work with. Predicting political events, particularly revolutions, development of strong opposition as we've had in Iran, coups, that kind of thing, is the toughest challenge we've got. Sometimes we make it, sometimes we don't. I never will predict that we'll make them all. I'll never be satisfied unless we do. I'm delighted that the President is interested and concerned enough about his intelligence support that he expressed an interest here in trying to see how he could help us improve this type of predicting for the future, particularly by bringing the National Security Council, the State Department, and the Intelligence Community into even closer teamwork on this. And out of his interest and support here, we hope we'll do better in the future.

Q: To put the same question a little more directly and simply, did you screw up in Iran?

A: No.

Q: The President indicates that he didn't get the sort of intelligence he has the right to expect.

A: Well you may know the President better than I do and you may have read his message better than I do, but I didn't read that in his message. Did you? Did you have access to it?

Q: Maybe I read between the lines.

A: The word Iran isn't in his note to me.

Q: The timing left that impression. Did you mislead the President in any way?

A: No.

Q: Did you fail to inform him in any way? This policy, I mean did this event come about in any way because of a situation like Iran.?

A: No, that policy has been here for the 21 months I've been here. I started that at the very beginning.

Q: One of the special problems on a case like Iran where you have a friendly government, you are trying to maintain some kind of contact with the possible dissenting element without disturbing the regime too much. Is that a serious problem?

A: Yes, it's a very difficult problem because if you get caught spying on the Russians, nobody is terribly unhappy. If you get caught spying on the British, we are terribly embarrassed and we wouldn't spy on the British, you know, they're our very close allies and friends. So the extent that you have contact with dissident elements in a friendly country, you can be misinterpreted as trying to subvert the regime and so on. But I'm not trying to make excuses. We could have done better in Iran but I'm saying to you that if the things that the Intelligence Community misses over a long period of time are these eruptions that come up--coups, assassinations, disorders, surprise results of democratic elections--yes, we're not happy. But the principal job is to be sure the decisionmakers have the long-range thrust of what is going on; things to which they can really respond.

Q: In view of your policy of openness with the press, I find it a little surprising that your Iran desk person is not here today. We've got the Far East something or other and somebody else, but we don't have anyone who answers for Iran. Was that deliberate on your part or does that mean ^{that} that person is no longer occupying that particular desk?

A: Among other things we're very thin on Iran, which is one of our problems. We're very thin on the expertise that was most applicable here, the sociological, political expertise.

Q: Admiral Turner, you deserve a little help. [REDACTED] tried awfully hard to get me to say who did we want to talk to today and I don't think I said anything about Iran. Did I? STATINTL

A: We're in the midst of a very tense week in Iran and I can't spare people.

Q: Admiral, to put this on a somewhat more positive note, are you at liberty to tell us who "the enemy is?"

A: Yes, let me give you my synopsis of it. The Shah has been-- you're saying the enemy of the Shah, the opponents of the Shah, the opponents of the existing regime? He's been trying to liberalize, democratize his country in a gradual way and he is beset by the right wing religious extremists who feel that he has contravened the laws of Islam. He is beset by the left wing Tuda Communist party, who ^{have} ~~are~~ their own opposition to any regime of a non-Communist nature. And in between the two, there must be a wide spectrum of people who, for very different views, have issue with the Shah and his regime--intellectuals, businessmen who have had their lot improved considerably but don't feel they've been given enough voice in the government, and I think those range in all kinds of gradations. It's a very interesting situation and one of the reasons it's difficult to have predicted, is that there is not a real cohesive opposition--you can't put your finger on a group of people who are sitting there in charge of this.

That's what
Q: Admiral, we're asking you.

A: I think what coalesced it and where we, you, the academics, ~~I mean~~ I don't know who went around the world predicting this eruption. I should have done it better than anybody else, I'm not trying to pass

the blame. I'm just saying that I'm not the only guy that didn't say on such and such a date this thing was going to erupt. I should have, but where we missed it, in my view, is underestimating the strength of the Moslem revival here ^{the} cause it's been engendered in recent years. And I think that was the coalescing element, not a bunch of Moslem people or religious leaders, but the fervor of renewed enthusiasm for their religion, a feeling that maybe Mecca was really becoming the center of the world again because of the greatly increased position and strength of that part of the world. And that around this fervor coalesced these various other dissident elements, but not with some individual as the leader of the whole thing. That's why it's hard for the Shah today to grapple with the problem to some extent because, you know, where does he go to say well, I'll change in these ways and let's try to do something different.

Q: (Inaudible)

A: Well that's what all my detractors say, but that's not the case at all. There's nothing that we have done to reduce the human intelligence effort applicable to this situation. In fact, in my opinion, in the year and a half I've been here we've strengthened the human intelligence capabilities, not weakened it. Taking 820 unnecessary people out of a system doesn't weaken it unless you're one of the 820 and believe you're so good that you can't be spared. Why? Because if you've got people who are underemployed and over-supervised, it doesn't help your productivity. You don't write

better stories if you've got more people kibitzing your product do you? And that's what we had here. Excuse me, one last thing; the reductions were in headquarters. So we didn't take any people out of Iran or other countries.

Q: Are you saying that the facts, ~~in~~ the data from which someone could have devined that something was about to happen in Iran were available to the CIA but the analysis was inadequate?

A: Well, you never have all the data you would like or, in retrospect, could have had, but I think most of the data ~~that~~ was available in the open categories, you know, to you as much as to me in this case.

Q: We smelled the tear gas down at the White House when the Shah was here--there was nothing classified about it.

Well, I think there's another point here too, but one of the stories that I read suggested that bankers, for example, were telling ^{the King} for several months before this occurred that they had asked the King to ship his ~~money~~ money out of the country and you'd think this would be a pretty good sign that this was far more serious than merely just a bunch of dissidents. (Admiral Turner) ^{you've} seen those reports somewhere in wire services that suggest that the information was there and that it was not that difficult to get--the bankers got it and the CIA didn't ^{and} and I just wondered how you handle, or what your response is to that suggestion.

A: Well now, first of all, you jump to a big conclusion there. You say the CIA didn't get it.

Q: I didn't jump to a conclusion, Admiral, what I'm saying to you is what I read in wire service reports that were gathered by reporters who were in various parts of the world.

A: Well, but if you didn't jump to a conclusion, the wire service jumped to a conclusion of knowing what's going on inside the CIA. And I deny that either you or the wire service have that access and you're jumping to a conclusion there. Now, yeah we were aware of this weren't we? Yes.

Q: The world of collection is full of secrets *but an awful lot of that is mislevel.*
We get bankers' assessments of _____ *in* the most incredible countries, the most stable countries in the world where, for one reason or another having to do with exchange rate problems, with temporary difficulties in balance of the payments such as we had in Mexico during the *Echeverria and the* _____ change, of massive capital flights. Do we interpret that as being the imminent collapse of a regime? Of course not. Iran was a special situation which was extremely difficult to assess because you had there, over a period of years, a massive displacement of highly structured rural poor into the urban areas where all of the modernization was going on and they became disoriented. They were not received into a community in the urban areas and they were fair game for rabble-rousing, and it's very difficult to communicate with those people for anybody, and I must point to the outstanding example of a person who misread the

signals. It wasn't somebody in the CIA but it was the Shah, and he was well-advised by people who supposedly knew what was going on.

A: And the other people who are as much surprised as anybody were the so-called opposition leaders. I really don't think they thought they were going to succeed to the degree they did. And, you know, we're almost trying to paint a black and white picture here like the CIA was saying to the President, for Heaven's sakes, there's not a thing wrong in Iran, on the one hand; on the other hand you are saying, why didn't we predict the date on which this eruption was going to take place.

Q: It seems to me the point involved here that we all seem to be taking nam for granted and that is that had the CIA made a better analysis, presumably something would have been done about it. My question to you, Admiral, is even if you had assessed the situation correctly, what would we have done about it?

A: Well, I'm not a policymaker and I have to foreswear that business because otherwise my analyses look tainted. But I'm hardstretched to think there was much we could have done to have changed this trend of events.

Q: We'd of assassinated a few priests, or whatever they call them ?

A: Well you say we, I can only assure you I have an Executive Order that prohibits my thinking about that let alone doing it. So, no, we wouldn't have.

Q: (inaudible) *Can't you have had it done?*

That's just as much a part of my prohibition as doing it ourselves.

But that's why I made the point earlier that the most important part of intelligence is being sure you are keeping the decisionmakers abreast of the trends that are happening because they ^{can} react to those.

Q: Admiral, is that the mission of the CIA to inform the decisionmakers?

A: Oh yes.

Q: Admiral, if I may get this a little less particular and somewhat more general just for a second. ^{That} is the primary mission of the CIA. Are covert operations also a part of the activity, if they are not now?

A: They are now.

Q: You have made a distinction with regard to different kinds of information gathering ^{between} political, economic. Would you make a distinction between ^{your} information gathering mission and the covert political mission?

A: Covert political action is the effort to influence events in a foreign country without it being known who was doing the influencing. It is not an intelligence function, which is collecting information and analyzing information and producing evaluations for decisionmakers. Since 1947 no President has assigned covert political action to any agency other than the Central Intelligence Agency for execution.

So we have had that responsibility, we still have it, it's today under much tighter wraps than ever before. To wit, before we can conduct a covert political action the National Security Council must review it, the President must sign that it is in the national interest, and I must notify up to eight committees of the Congress that we're doing it. The chances of this happening without it being in conformance with U.S. policy is slim. In short, it's not our job to think these up and to go off and do them. It's my job ^{where} ~~and~~ we're having a policy session to be prepared, if asked, to offer what could be done in a covert political action mode to assist the policy that is being derived. And, if so, I'll say this is what we could do and the National Security Council will say, we think that's a good idea and make its recommendation to the President who will then sign a directive to me to do it.

Q: What's your role, in conjunction with this, in regard to the SALT negotiations and can you give us some evaluation of how the tentative agreement is going to affect the strategic balance?

A: My principal role in SALT is with respect to the verification of the terms agreed. And, in the process of developing our SALT position, I have been very regularly consulted and in each event I give the policymakers my evaluation of how well we can check on this provision if it's agreed and negotiated. There's nothing can be checked 100 percent certain so I have to give them an estimate of the probability we would detect any violation of this agreement. They then have to go ahead and negotiate and decide what's in the national interest

here, how much assurance^{to} they have to have to feel comfortable. I also try to estimate for them what are the dangers on the overall balance of a violation, so they can weigh that. I give them the risk factor if there is a deliberate attempt to violate this agreement, both in terms of the probability they'll get away with it ^{and} the damage will do to the military balance. I'll testify on this, I am sure, before the Congress in great detail, obviously in a classified session, when the time comes. But that's our role, it's not to decide whether it's a good SALT agreement or a bad SALT agreement.

Q: Could you break down for us how far down this list of probability ~~do~~ you come when you said nothing is 100 percent certain? How far down the scale do you come in regard to verification of violations under the SALT agreement as we know it today?

A: No I can't tell you.

Q: Have you told them?

A: Oh, I've told the decision^{makers} in excruciating detail for each provision.

Q: You don't think that the public, in view of this new policy of openness on the part of the CIA and all of the government, should not be made aware of what it's intelligence agency feels about anything as important as the SALT agreement?

A: I think that to disclose how well we could check on each of these provisions of the SALT agreement would be handing too much to the

other side on a silver platter. It's a very highly technical, very highly classified means of obtaining this information. The Soviets have their own man named Andropov, who is doing the same thing on their side. They undoubtedly come to different conclusions because they have different means of obtaining information and I don't want them comparing their evaluations with mine and drawing conclusions as to how we get our information because then they may shut it off and my evaluations will plummet from A to E.

Q: But ratification of SALT II, if there is a SALT II, is going to depend rather heavily on public credence of the verification.

A: No it isn't. Well, yes, indirectly it's going to depend on a hundred votes.

Q: 167.

A: Okay, you're right.

Q: And there are a lot of those votes right now who^{are} talking a great deal about that very question.

A: And I'll give them every detail I can about it. They're in a tough spot if their constituents all say no and they're persuaded by all the evidence they get that it's yes and they can't disclose that information to the public, but that's the same thing they do when they vote on a B-1 bomber or a missile system or anything else. So they've got a problem, I agree, but I don't think we can go public with the details of how we verify these things.

Q: And that problem will be largely technical. I mean, exclusively technical in terms of intelligence collection data?

A: Well you can always hope that you get, as your friend on your left said, human intelligence on these too. But, you know, we talk about national technical means as the verification technique and you want to apply all the human intelligence you can but you don't want to count on it because it comes and goes. You want to have a system that is more certain.

Q: We've been living under a SALT agreement for, what, 6 years now, and I wonder whether the provisions in the new agreement, whether there's a difference in kind between the verification problems we had under SALT I from the verification problems ... could you describe the differences in kind?

A: Yes. They're more qualitative considerations. We're talking about an agreement that hasn't been signed yet. But you've seen it in the press, many of the proposed terms and I can't enunciate for you which ones are which ~~or which ones~~, of course none of them are fully agreed. But there are more qualitative things here, are you developing a new type of missile.

Q: You mean the testing, the modernization?

A: Yes, like modernization is not in the old one. It's a more numerical counting in the old agreement plus here there are things like range estimates and things like that that didn't exist before.

Q: Most of those are, if I'm not mistaken, this of course is _____--
most of provisions _____ would be the protocol
rather than the treaty. The treaty would count _____ just
like SALT I _____.

A: Yes, I think there (tape turned)

Q: was the CIA caught napping on _____ moved in?

A: No.

Q: Did you give the President the first intelligence on this _____?

A: Yes.

Q: How long had they been in before you became aware of _____?

A: A few days.

Q: A few days, is that all?

A: A very short time.

Q: Do you, yourself, feel these _____ we'll worry about
the entire U.S. but also the _____?

A: That's a policy issue, I don't want to make an evaluative judgment.
I'm here to tell you whether they're there or not, who they are and
what they are.

Q: Do you make an evaluation whether they're offensive or defensive
_____?

A: Well I'm a military man and I don't happen to believe there's much of a distinction between offensive and defensive between you and me, but I do tell the decision maker what the characteristics of the vehicles are and that's my job. They can judge whether they want to call them offensive or defensive but I've never, as a matter of terminology, felt that was a very useful military distinction. There are very few situations where anything so-called defensive can't have an offensive application. Nuclear armament?

Q: The MIG-23 has that capability doesn't it?

A: I think I have to stand on the President's public statement on that that we have no evidence of a nuclear capability in Cuba at this time.

Q: On the larger question of Soviet intelligence generally, without depending on the FBI, is there a sense of ebb and flow of it as detente comes and goes or is it sort of a constant reflexive thing that they just naturally spy? What sort of feeling does one have at these times compared to other days, other times?

A. Well I see no indication that detente has led to any ebbing. In fact, I've said a number of times that while I think detente is a net plus, that's a personal opinion not an intelligence officer's assessment--from an intelligence officer's point of view it's a net minus. That is, they have more opportunities to spy derivative from detente than do we, it's a asymmetrical situation. The Director of the FBI said that in October alone a hundred KGB agents about came

to this country. And, again, I'm not talking anti-detente because there are many other factors besides intelligence with which you weigh the value of detente. But, they have increased their human intelligence activities against us with the opportunities available to them to visit our country or meet with our citizens through many of the avenues opened up through detente.

Q: Admiral, if I may, _____ covert action operations question I asked you. At what point was this new system launched?

A: In 1974 the Hughes-Ryan--Mr. Ryan late of Guyana--Amendment was passed by the Congress requiring that we notify the appropriate committees of the Congress which have now increased to eight. It's an interesting point but I think that the other provisions that the President sign this and it be approved by the National Security Council came in February of '76 in an Executive Order that President Ford signed. But I would have to have that checked. But '74 is the basic threshold here.

Q: It's not to dispute it but, seriously, how covert can anything be *that goes to 3 committees of the Congress?*

A: Not much if there's not pretty good agreement on it. If the committees of the Congress really are convinced that this is in the national interest, they are just as good at keeping secrets as anybody. Your danger comes when it's highly inflammatory and controversial and you want to take some initiative here.

Q: Doesn't that have a substantial chilling effect on the initiatives of the Agency?

A: In the covert political action field, yes. But I also happen to feel that the opportunities for useful employment of covert action are much less today than they were in the past.

Q: Why is that--besides domestic political _____?

A: Yes--no. Setting that aside, if it were guaranteed covert. A typical covert action is to provide financial and advisory support to democratic politicians in a country where they're running against a strongly supported Communist opposition--externally supported Communist opposition. Today many democratic politicians would be reluctant to take CIA money for fear if they got exposed in their own country, they would be a net political minus rather than a plus for lots of reasons. Secondly, the world is so much more open, the communications are so much greater today. Who knew what was going on in Guatemala when the CIA acted down there in--when was it--'54, or even in Iran in '52. Whereas today, it's just a much bigger fishbowl that we live in. There are lesser opportunities to exert the kind of influence that has been exerted in the past in some of these areas. But I feel very strongly we must keep a covert action capability in being. I don't know what the climate will be in this country or in the world in three, four, or five years and I don't want to be like the ladies with the lamp who found they didn't have any oil when the time came.

Q: You said before your biggest problem was keeping classified documents away from us. What's your second biggest problem?

Q: What about recruitment?

A: No recruitment is not a problem. That's very interesting. We're very pleased that even through the height of public criticism of the Agency recruitment did not drop. And recruitment is high today and as far as we can tell the quality is good. There are particular areas of problems, there are so many more women who are conducting a profession with as much overseas activity as we have, we have sometimes a problem in finding a compatible husband/wife team assignment. And it is getting more difficult for us to find people willing to take the overseas assignments--that is just one reason. Also, I think

Q: Are you suffering for cover, the lack of cover with restrictions on _____?

A: Yes.

Q: What was that second biggest problem? _____
second or third biggest problem _____?

A: Well it's getting a straight story out of the press. I read about myself so often that I know that their stories aren't straight.

Q: Is it still a policy of the CIA to lie _____?

A: I don't believe it is and I've assured the Congress that when I testify to them there are no lies.

Q: One last question. _____ hot spot in South America. Do you view the dissent _____ as any Communist threat in that country? How do you decide

A: Well any sense of instability that's sort of disorganized as that is can lead to Communist problems. I don't see the as being controlled by the Communists at this point, but you have to have some concern when there's a lot of turbulence. Who knows what will evolve from it before you're finished.

I enjoyed your questions. They're penetrating and good and we like to feel that exchanges like this will help you to understand us, the problems we've got and the importance of what we're trying to do for the country. And I hope and assume your question on whether we're telling you the truth is factitious, because I've never lied in my life and I'm not going to find myself in any job working for our fine government that requires me to lie. It's not necessary and one thing we've been trying to establish with Herb's office here, with this greater openness, willingness to go out and be seen in the public, is that what we have as a role for our country is a very honorable, very necessary and important one. It's not a perfect world. If it were and everybody exchanged all the data we need, we wouldn't have to look behind people's backs. But

it isn't that kind of world and we're here to get the information in a reasonable manner that the country needs in order to conduct a foreign political, military and economic policy. It's my view that having good information today so we don't confront the great wheat steals of 1972 and that kind of thing were just a plain lack of economic data, did you and me out of a lot of money in our own pocketbooks, is much more critical to our country perhaps than it's been in the past. When we're in a situation of near military parity the leverage of good military information is a lot better, a lot more important than it was when we were vastly superior. When most countries followed our political cues we didn't need as good information about them as when we're truly negotiating with even small and independent and activist countries. So, we're excited about the role we have to play for our country and appreciate your willingness to come out here today and help share it with us and understand it with us. Thank you.

